

**A Message from Illinois  
Attorney General Lisa Madigan**



In recent years, methamphetamine has become a significant drug problem in the Midwest. Meth is now a major challenge for law enforcement authorities and ordinary citizens throughout Illinois. According to a National Association of

Counties survey, methamphetamine is the biggest drug problem facing law enforcement agencies in the United States (*The Meth Epidemic in America: Two Surveys of U.S. Counties*, July 2005).

As a young person, you are in a unique position to address meth use and production within your community. There are numerous opportunities for you to become involved in organizations working to combat the meth epidemic. Through your hard work and effort we can achieve a positive outcome. I encourage you to become a partner in this prevention movement and see the positive impact you can personally have on the lives of your peers and community members.

Together, we can work to stop the spread of methamphetamine. This brochure will familiarize you with the serious nature of the epidemic and provide you with resources to begin working towards a solution. I urge you to join with others in the fight to help keep our communities and our families safe.

Sincerely,

Lisa Madigan

Illinois Attorney General



**LISA MADIGAN**  
**ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**Be a leader!**

You can help prevent the spread of meth and other harmful drugs by working with these statewide leaders in drug prevention:

Illinois Drug Education Alliance  
1-800-252-8951 or [www.bestofidea.com](http://www.bestofidea.com)

Illinois National Guard  
Counter-Drug Program  
1-217-761-3728

Operation Snowball  
[www.os-iti.org](http://www.os-iti.org)

Prevention First, Inc.  
1-800-252-8951 or [www.prevention.org](http://www.prevention.org)

University of Illinois Extension / 4-H  
1-217-333-0910 or [www.extension.uiuc.edu](http://www.extension.uiuc.edu)

Please visit MethNet at  
[www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov](http://www.IllinoisAttorneyGeneral.gov)

# YOUTH ACTION



**HOW YOU CAN  
HELP STOP THE  
METH EPIDEMIC**



**LISA MADIGAN**  
ILLINOIS ATTORNEY GENERAL

## Dangers of Meth Use

- Meth is the number one illicit drug problem in rural America and the fastest growing illicit drug threat in the nation.
- Individuals aged 12 to 30 years old are the most common meth users.
- Meth is a powerfully addictive stimulant.
- Meth produces hyperactivity, decreased appetite, and a false sense of well-being.



Long-term effects include: Insomnia, Paranoia, Aggression, Hallucinations, Anxiety, Severe Depression, and Tooth Decay/Loss.

## Youth Meth Use Rates

- Nationwide, 7.6% of high school students report having tried methamphetamine (*Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 2003).
- Nationwide, approximately 20-30% of 10th and 12th graders and nearly 12% of 8th graders say that meth is "fairly easy" or "very easy" to obtain (*Monitoring the Future: A Continuing Study of American Youth*, 2004).
- In Illinois, meth treatment admissions for youth aged 12 to 17 increased more than 215% from 2002 to 2004 (*Department of Health Services, DASA Data Book, Fiscal Year 2004*).

## Meth Endangers Communities

- Meth labs can explode or catch fire from the volatile chemical combinations used to produce the drug.
- Meth use often involves other criminal activity such as theft.
- Increased child abuse and neglect rates are found in families where the parents use meth.
- Meth waste contaminates the environment. Each pound of meth produces 5 pounds of toxic waste.



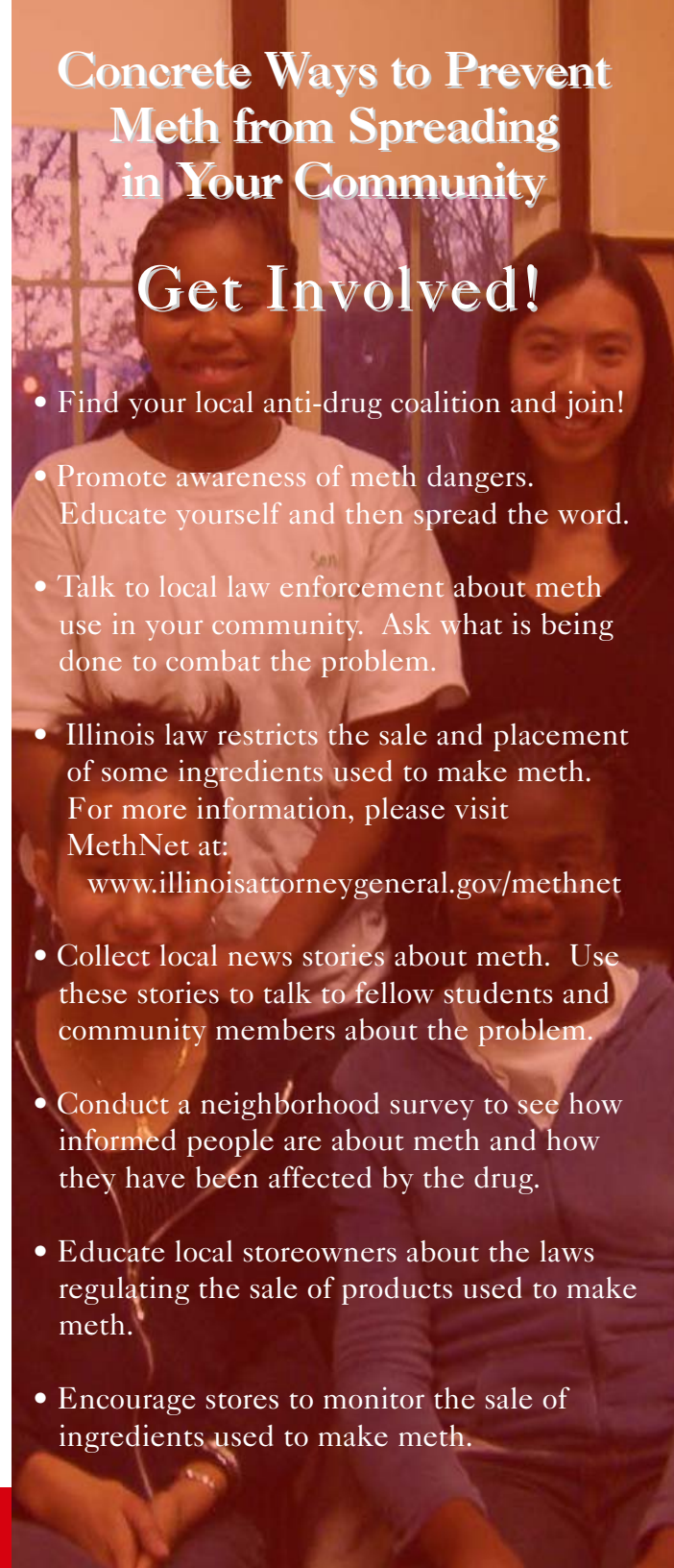
## Community Prevention

- Community prevention means creating a healthy environment that addresses the norms, messages, access, and policies that prevent negative behavior such as drug use.
- Community involvement is needed to prevent the spread of meth. It is vital that we create a community atmosphere that does not support drug use or production and limits the accessibility of drugs and their ingredients.

## Concrete Ways to Prevent Meth from Spreading in Your Community

### Get Involved!

- Find your local anti-drug coalition and join!
- Promote awareness of meth dangers. Educate yourself and then spread the word.
- Talk to local law enforcement about meth use in your community. Ask what is being done to combat the problem.
- Illinois law restricts the sale and placement of some ingredients used to make meth. For more information, please visit MethNet at: [www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/methnet](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/methnet)
- Collect local news stories about meth. Use these stories to talk to fellow students and community members about the problem.
- Conduct a neighborhood survey to see how informed people are about meth and how they have been affected by the drug.
- Educate local storeowners about the laws regulating the sale of products used to make meth.
- Encourage stores to monitor the sale of ingredients used to make meth.



**Help stop the meth epidemic.**